

# War Memorials Trust's ideas for the Heritage badge: Alternative C

On this sheet you will learn:

- How you could use a war memorial project to help you achieve Alternative C of your Heritage Activity Badge.

## Requirements

To achieve Alternative C you must:

- Complete a study of an aspect of **national** or **local history** or of family heritage.
- Display, exhibit or present the **results** in a library, to a group of Scouts or a local interest group.

Our suggestions for how you could meet the first requirement with a war memorial project are given below.

## Researching the history of a war memorial

War memorials often have a **fascinating** story to tell. While they share a common purpose each one is **unique** and represents the beliefs, wishes and feelings of one **community** in the immediate aftermath of war. Researching the **background** of the memorial – the people who designed and raised money for it, the decisions involved in the design, location and people to be commemorated – can reveal much about the community at the



Little Berkhamstead war memorial cross, Hertfordshire © War Memorials Trust, 2008

time and the local reaction to international events. It can also help the **custodian** make decisions today. If for example, relocating the memorial is proposed, it is helpful to know if there is a special **reason** for the memorial being where it is. This may affect the decision. Knowing the original criteria for **inclusion** on a war memorial can also help with decisions when it comes to making additions of names for more recent conflicts.

To research the memorial's background you will need to use local records such as contemporary **newspapers**, local **museums**, and council or parochial records. More information on possible sources of information can be found in War Memorials Trust's 'Researching the history of a war memorial' helpsheet, which can be downloaded from [www.warmemorials.org/a-z](http://www.warmemorials.org/a-z).

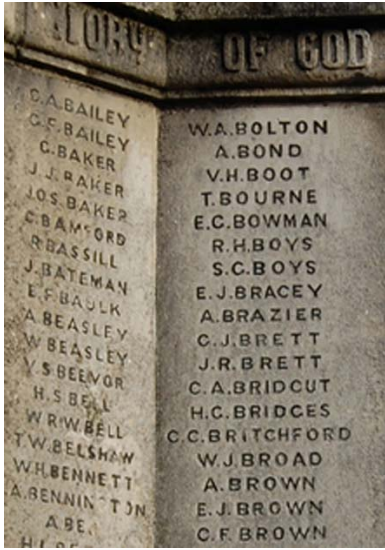
This could be a particularly interesting activity if you have any direct **link** with the war memorial. For example, many war memorials were erected by **Scouts** in memory of their fellow members, or the memorial might be located in your **school** in memory of former pupils. Your research might also reveal information about the history of the troop or the school.

## Researching the names on a war memorial

Another thing you could research is the **people** commemorated by war memorials. Many memorials list **names** and there are various ways of finding out more about the people. Even if your local memorial does not list names it is still possible to find out who from the community the memorial intended to commemorate and research their background.

This type of research can reveal many of the **personal** stories behind the war

memorial and is an excellent way of gaining an understanding of the **losses** suffered by the community. Often finding out something about the people involved can help you 'get to know' them, making events seem more 'real' and their impact more **profound**.



Some of the names on St Albans war memorial cross, Hertfordshire © Jill Durham, 2011.

Information about how to research the names on a war memorial can be found on our 'Researching war memorials and names' information sheet, which is available at [www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/youth-groups/general/11-18](http://www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org/youth-groups/general/11-18). You could research some **basic** general information about more than one person named on a memorial, or carry out a more **detailed** investigation into the lives of one or two. More detailed research could also incorporate finding out about the person's **family** which would contribute towards the family heritage element of this badge. What you decide will depend on the extent of information available and your own personal interests.

## Find out about Scouting during the wars

If you do not have a war memorial near you, or if it is difficult to obtain resources to research it, you could research the history of Scouting, or your specific troop, during the First and Second World Wars. This could contribute towards the **national history** element of this badge.

Some Scout counties or troops have **archived** information about their history – ask your Group Leader for help accessing these. There are also many online links to

information about the history of Scouting, and **local** information sources may help you discover more about Scouting in your locality. War Memorials Trust's 'Scout war memorials' information sheet provides general background information about Scouting during the World Wars.

As well as finding out about Scouting in the past, your work could also **compare** it to Scouts today, and reflect on these changes and **differences**. How do you think you and your troop would react today if you were in similar circumstances to your predecessors?

## Presenting your work

You are also required to **present** your work and the results of your study in some way, either to your Scout **group** or to a wider audience within your local **community**.

This could be another Scout group or local Cub pack, members of a local branch of the Royal British Legion or another local interest group. You could either **invite** people to visit your meeting or go to them, but remember to **discuss** your plans with your leader before organising anything. Think about how to make your talk and your results **interesting** – have you got any photos or other sources of information that you could show? You could even make a short video – think about **linking** this work with any other activity badges you are planning to complete.

Another way of doing this might be to create a **display** of your findings and ask the local library if you can exhibit this there. Alternatively, you could find out if your locality has a community newsletter or website which you could use to let others know about your project.

## Summary

You could achieve this part of your Heritage badge by:

- Researching the history of a local war memorial and the processes involved in its creation.
- Researching the people that are named on the memorial.